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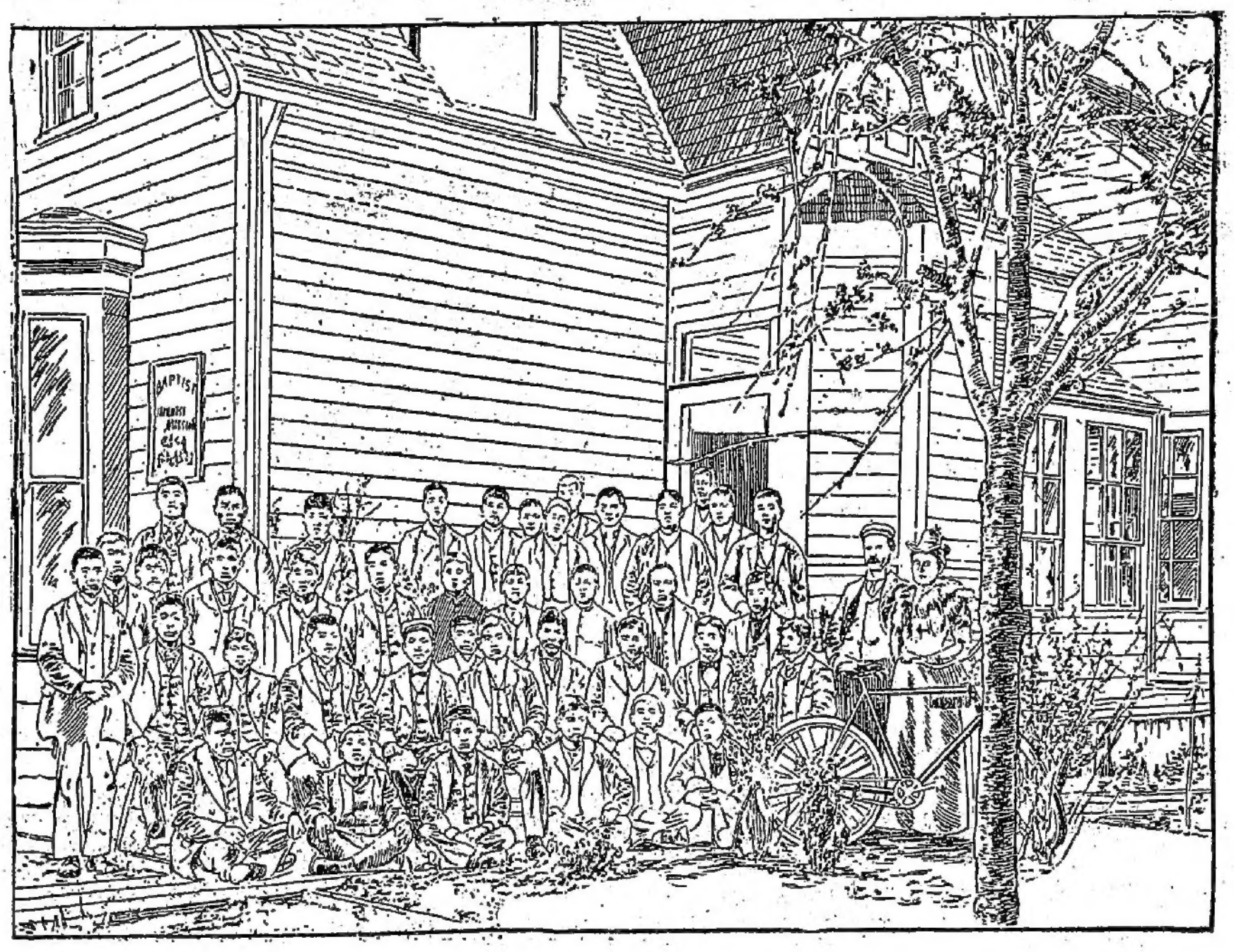


Foreign Missions at Home.

(By the Rev. Ralph W. Trotter, B.Th., Victoria, B.C.)

This represents forty Japanese young men who belong to the Baptist Japanese mission in Victoria, B.C. The gentleman and lady under the tree with them are Mr. and Mrs. Trotter. Mr. Trotter is pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Victoria, with which the mission is connected. This mission is not quite a year old, and yet we have forty-one Christians. I want to tell the story of it to the boys and girls who read the 'Messenger,' because it is an illustration of the power and importance of little things.

About three years ago, one of the seal-fishing schooners arrived home here from Japan. Mr. Trotter went aboard the vessel to welcome the sailors home, and to invite them to come to church. Among them he found a young 'Jap' named Iwanaga, who had stowed himself away when the vessel was leaving Japan, and when a few days out to sea had showed himself to the captain and offered to work his passage to Victoria. On the long voyage from Japan to Canada, he had learned to speak a few words of English, so when Mr. Trotter invited him to come to church, he came. He proved to be a very intelligent young man, and began at once to master our language under the tutoring of the pastor of Calvary Church. Of course, the dear old Bible was the text-book, and long before 'Billy' (for the people in our church fondly dubbed him Billy because his name is so hard to remember) could read well, he had learned to trust Jesus as his Saviour, and at once wanted to be baptized.

As soon as he was a member of the church, he became a most earnest worker for Jesus among his own countrymen in this city. His first step was to meet every ship coming from Japan, and give a welcome to all new-comers, in the name of his newly-found friend. But where was he to take them? He asked the church for the use of the parlor, and night after night he would be found teaching them from His Word the Gospel of God's dear Son.

Just at this time the church needed a janitor. 'Billy' applied for and secured the position; this afforded him the opportunity he so much wanted to work as self-appointed missionary among the Japs of Victoria. He labored for a year, a class was formed in the Sunday School for them, yet only one more united with the Church, on profession of his faith in Christ; the work seemed to be almost a failure.

After this year of service, 'Billy's' mother, an old lady still living in Japan, took sick, and this necessitated his earning more money than the church could pay, for his mother's entire support now depended on him. He left the city, going to Vancouver and Steveston to work in the mills and salmon canneries. Another year passed by, we lost track of him. Two or three of the young men continued to come to the Sunday School, but the work practically ceased.

Not quite a year ago, one day there came to the pastor, Mr. Trotter, fifteen young Japanese men, asking him to establish a mission for them, and eight of the fifteen asked to be received into the church. We at once appointed a committee to examine each candidate on his merit. The committee consisted of the pastor and his wife, and six ladies and gentlemen from the church. Great care was taken that each member of the committee should be godly and competent. The examination was carried on through an interpreter, and lasted for hours, each man being questioned and cross-questioned with the greatest care. Now, boys and girls, what do you suppose was the sweetest thing about it all? Listen! All but two told us that they owed their conversion to the faithful work of 'Billy' and the two who did not, we found, were Christians before they met him.

Before I tell you anything more about him, I want you to look at the picture and pick out the only one among the Japanese who has his cap on; that is 'Billy.'

We at once rented the house shown in the picture, and the good people of our church furnished it with twenty beds, and the furnishings for a kitchen and dining room, a parlor, and meeting room. Now came the question, 'Who was to be our missionary;' Nobody knew where 'Billy' was. However, all minds turned to him, and while we were considering it the Japanese had a meeting and voted to request us to secure 'Billy' as their leader. A few days' search found him in Vancouver. With but little persuasion he came back to take up his own work. He has worked day and night since

coming. Every month new converts have been added to the church, until now we have forty-one members, and the new converts are now awaiting baptism. About six months ago, 'Billy' received word that his aged mother was very ill, and in all probability would not live more than five or six months. Some friends here offered to pay his expenses to Japan, but 'No,' he said, 'I must not take money from our mission; I will get another brother to carry on mission, I go to fishing Frazer River and earn money.'

This he did in spite of all we could say, and is now in Japan.

You will see below the letter just received from him in Japan. Although there are one or two curious expressions it is an excellent composition for a young Jap, who never went to an English school a day in his life.

Oct. 10th, 1898.

75 Bluff, Yokohama, Japan.

To Mr. R. W. Trotter.

Dear Brother,—

I trust that in the mercy of God this letter will find you and Mrs. Trotter in good health and rich in the heavenly blessings that come to us through our Lord Jesus Christ; may you be rich indeed in all that pertains to the knowledge of His will and glorious Gospel. I am glad to say that I arrived here safely on 3rd Instant, and also very glad that my mother's sick get better at present, and I am waiting now here, my elder Brother come from Hokukaido or Ezo northern Island to talk about family matters, and hoping also to stay here for a while to study Bible if I got the time to do so.

I never forget Victoria, our mission, and our church, and praying that God will bless dear Brothers and Sisters, and their homes,

With best wishes and prayers.

I am, yours very truly,

E. Iwanaga.

Of course, the work goes on, for when God removes one workman he always finds another. Mr. J. J. Utsunomya is now our efficient Japanese pastor. We also expect 'Billy' back in a few months to take up his much-loved work.

Our boarding and sleeping department is very crowded, but more than pays for itself, and the surplus goes for light and fuel.

Do not some of the thoughtful young readers of the 'Messenger' want to ask a number of questions?

Someone says, 'What kind of Christians do they make?' I can only say that those we have had all prove faithful and earnest.

What kind of people are they? Well, small in size, strong, industrious, very polite, honest, kind, intelligent, hard students, very ambitious.

What is the main object of your mission?

1st. To save the precious souls from death.

2nd. To make Christian citizens of them.

3rd. To train men for mission work in British Columbia and Japan.

4th. To operate, from this base, a native mission in Japan. 'Billy' is now spying out the land.

5th. To educate! educate! educate! that they may be a blessing instead of a curse to this land.

6th. We are going to erect a building, commodious, and suitable for home, school, workshop, church, when God sends us the money. We need $5,000. He has already sent us $1,000. He will send the rest.

We could have hundreds of men if we had the room. These people must either be Christianized by us, or we shall be heathenized by them.

A Great Evangelist.

Dwight Lyman Moody was born at Northfield, Mass., Feb. 5, 1837. He worked on a farm until the age of seventeen, when he became a clerk in a shoe store in Boston. In 1856 he went to Chicago, and while engaged there in active business, entered zealously into missionary work among the poorer classes. During the civil war he was in the service of the Christian commission, and afterwards became a lay missionary of the Young Men's Christian Association, of Chicago. In 1873, accompanied by Mr. Sankey, an effective singer, he went to England, and the two instituted a series of week-day religious services, which attracted large and enthusiastic audiences. They returned to America in 1875, where they organized similar meetings all over the country. They again visited England in 1883. In addition to the many printed accounts of his meetings and reports of his addresses, Mr. Moody published 'Heaven,' 1880; 'Secret Power,' 1881; and 'The Way to God, and How to Find It,' 1884.

When Mr. Moody applied to his uncle, Mr. Samuel Holton, for a position in his shoe store in Boston, this gentleman agreed to engage him as salesman on the following conditions: First, he was to board at a place to be selected by his uncle; second, he was not to be out in the streets at night, or go to places of amusement which his uncle did not approve; third, he was to regularly attend the Mount Vernon Church and Sunday School. In his extremity, the young man agreed to all things required of him, and, what was more, he kept his agreement. In the Sunday School he was placed in the Bible class of Mr. Edward Kimball. His teacher says he felt as if he were not getting any hold of the young man, but was even failing to interest him, but one Sunday, when the lesson happened to be about Moses, he listened with considerable attention, and at length broke out with this question: 'That Moses was what you would call a pretty smart sort of a man wasn't he?' Glad at last to hear a word from his unpromising scholar, Mr. Kimball received the question with much favor, and enlarged upon it, greatly to young Moody's satisfaction. He soon began to warm towards his teacher. One day Mr. Kimball called upon him at his place of business, and, putting his hand kindly on his shoulder, inquired if he would not give his heart to Christ. That question awakened him, he sought the Saviour in earnest, and obtained the assurance of the pardon of his sins and of his acceptance as a child of God. Years afterwards he used to say, 'I can feel the touch of that man's hand on my shoulder even yet.'

Among his first missionary work was visiting the ships in Boston harbor on Sunday mornings, distributing tracts and testaments. He was always an enthusiastic Sunday School worker. Shortly after going to Chicago he started a Sunday School in a deserted saloon near the North Side Market, and occasionally held service during the evenings of the week. The region in which this school was opened may be understood from the fact that standing on the steps of the old market near by, his voice could be heard in two hundred drinking and gambling dens. It swarmed with young barbarians, just the kind of scholars he wanted. He had a kind of instinct that his mission, like that of his Master's, was to save those poor lost.

At the breaking out of the war in 1861, the devotional committee of the Y. M. C. A., of which Mr. Moody was chairman, found a new line of work made ready to their hands. On the arrival of the first regiment ordered to Camp Douglas for instruction, the committee was on the ground, and before tents were fairly pitched, a camp-meeting was in progress.

Mr. Moody travelled through every part of the United States and Canada, preaching the Gospel, and he had four campaigns in England, Ireland and Scotland. His last visit to the Old Country was during the years, 1892 and 1893. When in Belfast, the greatest meeting of his life was held, 16,000 people crowding into the building nightly to hear him. It was on his return from that campaign that he was nearly shipwrecked on the North German Lloyd SS. 'Spree.'

He was invited to conduct the great evangelistic campaign which is now in progress in Glasgow, Scotland, but through pressure of work at home, and perhaps recognizing that his physical powers were failing, he declined.

THE LATE MR. MOODY.

At noon time, on December 22, 1899, at his home in East Northfield, Mass., the famous evangelist passed peacefully away.

Mr. Moody was sixty-two years of age. A widow, two sons, and a daughter, survive. The cause of death was a general breaking down, due to over-work. Mr. Moody called his wife and children that morning, and told them that the end was not far off. The family remained close by the bedside all the forenoon. The evangelist was almost free from pain, and occasionally he talked with apparent ease, About the last words he was heard to utter were: 'I have always been an ambitious man, not to lay up wealth, but to find work to do.' Just before twelve o'clock, the watchers saw that the end was approaching, and exactly at noon the great preacher passed away.

Mr. Moody was stricken with heart trouble in Kansas City, on Nov. 16 last, while conducting revival meetings at Convention Hall. He was compelled to give up his work, and on the day following started for his home in the care of a physician. Mr. Moody probably addressed the largest crowds during his stay in Kansas City, that he ever faced, and he was under a great strain. He preached his last sermon on Thursday night, Nov. 16, fully 15,000 people listening to an earnest appeal that many stamped as the evangelist's greatest effort. —From the 'Witness.'

BOYS AND GIRLS

Black Rock.

(A tale of the Selkirks, by Ralph Connor.)

CHAPTER II.

THE BLACK ROCK CHRISTMAS.

Many strange Christmas Days have I seen, but that wild Black Rock Christmas stands out strangest of all. While I was revelling in my delicious second morning sleep, just awake enough to enjoy it, Mr. Craig came abruptly, announcing breakfast and adding, 'Hope you are in good shape, for we have our work before us this day.'

'Hello!' I replied, still half asleep, and anxious to hide from the minister that I was trying to gain a few more moments of snoozing delight, 'what's abroad?'

'The devil,' he answered shortly, and with such emphasis that I sat bolt upright, looking anxiously about.

'Oh! no need for alarm. He's not after you particularly—at least not to-day,' said Craig, with a shadow of a smile. 'But he is going about in good style, I can tell you.'

By this time I was quite awake. 'Well, what particular style does His Majesty affect this morning?'

He pulled out a showbill. 'Peculiarly gaudy and effective, is it not?'

The items announced were sufficiently attractive. The 'Frisco Opera Company were to produce the 'screaming farce,' 'The Gay and Giddy Dude'; after which there was to be a 'Grand Ball,' during which the 'Kalifornia Female Kickers' were to do some fancy figures; the whole to be followed by a 'big supper' with 'two free drinks to every man and one to the lady,' and all for the insignificant sum of two dollars.

'Can't you go one better?' I said.

He looked inquiringly and a little disgustedly at me.

'What can you do against free drinks and a dance, not to speak of the 'High Kickers'?' he groaned.

'No!' he continued; 'it's a clean beat for us to-day. The miners and lumbermen will have in their pockets ten thousand dollars, and every dollar burning a hole; and Slavin and his gang will get most of it. But,' he added, 'you must have breakfast. You'll find a tub in the kitchen; don't be afraid to splash. It is the best I have to offer you.'

The tub sounded inviting, and before many minutes had passed I was in a delightful glow, the effect of cold water and a rough towel, and that consciousness of virtue that comes to a man who has courage to face his cold bath on a winter morning.

The breakfast was laid with fine taste. A diminutive pine-tree, in a pot hung round with wintergreen, stood in the centre of the table.

'Well, now, this looks good; porridge, beefsteak, potatoes, toast, and marmalade.'

'I hope you will enjoy it all.'

There was not much talk over our meal. Mr. Craig was evidently preoccupied, and as blue as his politeness would allow him. Slavin's victory weighed upon his spirits. Finally he burst out, 'Look here! I can't, I won't stand it; something must be done. Last Christmas this town was for two weeks, as one of the miners said, "a little suburb of hell." It was something too awful. And at the end of it all one young fellow was found dead in his shack, and twenty or more crawled back to the camps, leaving their three months' pay with Slavin and his suckers.

'I won't stand it, I say.' He turned fiercely on me. 'What's to be done?'

This rather took me aback, for I had troubled myself with nothing of this sort in my life before, being fully occupied in keeping myself out of difficulty, and allowing others the same privilege. So I ventured the consolation that he had done his part, and that a spree more or less would not make much difference to these men. But the next moment I wished I had been slower in speech, for he swiftly faced me, and his words came like a torrent.

'God forgive you that heartless word! Do you know——? But no; you don't know what you are saying. You don't know that these men have been clambering for dear life out of a fearful pit for three months past, and doing good climbing too, poor chaps. You don't think that some of them have wives, most of them mothers and sisters, in the east or across the sea, for whose sake they are slaving here; the miners hoping to save enough to bring their families to this homeless place, the rest to make enough to go back with credit. Why, there's Nixon, miner, splendid chap; has been here for two years, and drawing the highest pay. Twice he has been in sight of his heaven, for he can't speak of his wife and babies without breaking up, and twice that slick son of the devil—that's Scripture, mind you—Slavin, got him, and 'rolled' him, as the boys say. He went back to the mines broken in body and in heart. He says this is his third and last chance. If Slavin gets him, his wife and babies will never see him on earth or in heaven. There is Sandy, too, and the rest. And,' he added, in a lower tone, and with the curious little thrill of pathos in his voice, 'this is the day the Saviour came to the world.' He paused, and then with a little sad smile, 'But I don't want to abuse you.'

'Do, I enjoy it, I'm a beast, a selfish beast;' for somehow his intense, blazing earnestness made me feel uncomfortably small.

'What have we to offer?' I demanded.

'Wait till I have got these things cleared away, and my housekeeping done.'

I pressed my services upon him, somewhat feebly, I own, for I can't bear dishwater; but he rejected my offer.

'I don't like trusting my china to the hands of a tender foot.'

'Quite right, though your china would prove an excellent means of defence at long range.' It was delf, a quarter of an inch thick. So I smoked while he washed up, swept, dusted, and arranged the room.

After the room was ordered to his taste, we proceeded to hold council. He could offer dinner, magic lantern, music. 'We can fill in time for two hours, but,' he added gloomily, 'we can't beat the dance and the "High Kickers."'

'Have you nothing new or startling?'

He shook his head.

'No kind of show? Dog show? Snake charmer?'

'Slavin has a monopoly of the snakes.'

Then he added hesitatingly, 'There was an old Punch-and Judy chap here last year, but he died. Whiskey again.'

'What happened to his show?'

'The Black Rock Hotel man took it for board and whiskey bill. He has it still, I suppose.'

I did not much relish the business; but I hated to see him beaten so I ventured, 'I have run a Punch and Judy in an amateur way at the 'Varsity.'

He sprang to his feet with a yell.

'You have! you mean to say it? We've got them! We've beaten them!' He had an extraordinary way of taking your help for granted. 'The miner chaps, mostly English and Welsh, went mad over the poor old showman, and made him so wealthy that in sheer gratitude he drank himself to death.'

He walked up and down in high excitement and in such evident delight that I felt pledged to my best effort.

'Well,' I said, 'first the poster. We must beat them in that.'

He brought me large sheets of brown paper, and after two hours hard work I had a dozen pictorial showbills done in gorgeous colors and striking designs. They were good, if I do say it myself.

The turkey, the magic lantern, the Punch and Judy show were all there, the last with a crowd before it in gaping delight. A few explanatory words were thrown in, emphasizing the highly artistic nature of the Punch and Judy entertainment.

Craig was delighted, and proceeded to perfect his plans. He had some half a dozen young men, four young ladies, and eight or ten matrons, upon whom he could depend for help. These he organized into a vigilance committee charged with the duty of preventing miners and lumbermen from getting away—to Slavin's. 'The critical moments will be immediately before and after dinner, and then again after the show is over,' he explained. 'The first two crises must be left to the care of Punch and Judy, and as for the last, I am not yet sure what shall be done'; but I saw he had something in his head, for he added, 'I shall see Mrs. Mayor.'

'Who is Mrs. Mayor?' I asked. But he made no reply. He was a born fighter, and he put the fighting spirit into us all. We were bound to win.

The sports were to begin at two o'clock. By lunch-time everything was in readiness. After lunch I was having a quiet smoke in Craig's shack when in he rushed, saying—

'The battle will be lost before it is fought. If we lose Quatre Bras, we shall never get to Waterloo.'

'What's up?'

'Slavin, just now. The miners are coming in, and he will have them in tow in half an hour.'

He looked at me appealingly. I knew what he wanted.

'All right; I suppose I must, but it is an awful bore that a man can't have a quiet smoke.'

'You're not half a bad fellow,' he replied, smiling. 'I shall get the ladies to furnish coffee inside the booth. You furnish them intellectual nourishment in front with dear old Punch and Judy.'

He sent a boy with a bell round the village announcing, 'Punch and Judy in front of the Christmas booth beside the church;' and for three-quarters of an hour I shrieked and sweated in that awful little pen. But it was almost worth it to hear the shouts of approval and laughter that greeted my performance. It was cold work standing about, so that the crowd was quite ready to respond when Punch, after being duly hanged, came forward and invited all into the booth for the hot coffee which Judy had ordered.

In they trooped, and Quatre Bras was won.

No sooner were the miners safely engaged with their coffee than I heard a great noise of bells and of men shouting; and on reaching the street I saw that the men from the lumber camp were coming in. Two immense sleighs, decorated with ribbons and spruce boughs, each drawn by

a four-horse team gaily adorned, filled with some fifty men, singing and shouting with all their might, were coming down the hill road at full gallop. Round the corner they swung, dashed at full speed across the bridge and down the street, and pulled up after they had made the circuit of a block, to the great admiration of the onlookers. Among others Slavin sauntered up good-naturedly, making himself agreeable to Sandy and those who were helping to unhitch his team.

'Oh, you need not take trouble with me or my team, Mike Slavin. Batchees and me and the boys can look after them fine,' said Sandy coolly.

This rejecting of hospitality was perfectly understood by Slavin and by all.

'Dat's too bad, heh?' said Baptiste wickedly; 'and, Sandy, he's got good money on his pocket for sure, too.' The boys laughed, and Slavin, joining in, turned away with Keefe and Blaney; but by the look in his eye I knew he was playing 'Br'er Rabbit,' and lying low.

Mr. Craig just then came up, 'Hello, boys! too late for Punch and Judy, but just in time for hot coffee and doughnuts.'

'Bon; dat's fuss rate,' said Baptiste heartily; 'where you keep him?'

'Up in the next tent next the church there. The miners are all in.'

'Ah, dat so? Dat's bad news for the shantymen, heh, Sandy?' said the little Frenchman dolefully.

'There was a clothes-basket full of doughnuts and a boiler of coffee left as I passed just now,' said Craig encouragingly.

'Allons, mes garcons; vite! never say keel!' cried Baptiste excitedly, stripping off the harness.

But Sandy would not leave the horses till they were carefully rubbed down, blanketed, and fed, for he was entered for the four-horse race and it behooved him to do his best to win. Besides, he scorned to hurry himself for anything so unimportant as eating; that he considered hardly worthy even of Baptiste. Mr. Craig managed to get a word with him before he went off, and I saw Sandy solemnly and emphatically shake his head, saying, 'Ah! we'll beat him this day,' and I gathered that he was added to the vigilance committee.

Old man Nelson was busy with his own team. He turned slowly at Mr. Craig's greeting, 'How is it, Nelson?' and it was with a very grave voice he answered, 'I hardly know, sir; but I am not gone yet, though it seems little to hold to.'

'All you want for a grip is what your hand can cover. What would you have? And besides, do you know why you are not gone yet?'

The old man waited, looking at the minister gravely.

'Because He hasn't let go His grip of you.'

'How do you know He's gripped me?'

'Now, look here, Nelson, do you want to quit this thing and give it all up?'

'No, no! For Heaven's sake, no! Why, do you think I have lost it?' said Nelson, almost piteously.

'Well, He's keener about it than you; and I'll bet you haven't thought it worth while to thank Him.'

'To thank Him,' he repeated, almost stupidly, 'for——'

'For keeping you where you are overnight,' said Mr. Craig, almost sternly.

The old man gazed at the minister, a light growing in his eyes.

'You're right. Thank God, you're right.' And then he turned quickly away, and went into the stable behind his team. It was a minute before he came out. Over his face there was a trembling joy.

'Can I do anything for you to-day?' he asked humbly.

'Indeed you just can,' said the minister, taking his hand and shaking it very warmly; and then he told him Slavin's programme and ours.

'Sandy is all right till after his race. After that is his time of danger,' said the minister.

'I'll stay with him, sir,' said old Nelson, in the tone of a man taking a covenant, and immediately set off for the coffee-tent.

'Here comes another recruit for your corps,' I said, pointing to Leslie Graeme, who was coming down the street at that moment in his light sleigh.

'I am not so sure. Do you think you could get him?'

I laughed. 'You are a good one.'

'Well,' he replied, half defiantly, 'is not this your fight too?'

'You made me think so, though I am bound to say I hardly recognise myself to-day. But here goes,' and before I knew it I was describing our plans to Graeme, growing more and more enthusiastic as he sat in his sleigh, listening with a quizzical smile I didn't quite like.

'He's got you too,' he said; 'I feared so.'

'Well,' I laughed, 'perhaps so. But I want to lick that man Slavin. I've just seen him, and he's just what Craig calls him, "a slick son of the devil." Don't be shocked; he says it is Scripture.'

'Revised version,' said Graeme gravely, while Craig looked a little abashed.

'What is assigned me, Mr. Craig? for I know that this man is simply your agent.

I repudiated the idea, while Mr. Craig said nothing.

'What's my part?' demanded Graeme.

'Well,' said Mr. Craig hesitatingly, 'of course I would do nothing till I had consulted you; but I want a man to take my place at the sports. I am referee.'

'That's all right,' said Graeme, with an air of relief; 'I expected something hard.'

'And then I thought you would not mind presiding at dinner—I want it to go off well.'

'Did you notice that?' said Graeme to me. 'Not a bad touch, eh?'

'That's nothing to the way he touched me. Wait and learn,' I answered, while Craig looked quite distressed. 'He'll do it, Mr. Craig, never fear,' I said, 'and any other little duty that may occur to you.'

'Now, that's too bad of you. That is all I want, honor bright,' he replied; adding, as he turned away, 'you are just in time for a cup of coffee, Mr. Graeme. Now I must see Mrs. Mavor.'

'Who is Mrs. Mavor?' I demanded of Graeme.

'Mrs. Mavor? The miners' guardian angel.'

We put up the horses and set off for coffee. As we approached the booth Graeme caught sight of the Punch and Judy show, stood still in amazement, and exclaimed, 'Can the dead live?'

'Punch and Judy never die,' I replied solemnly.

'But the old manipulator is dead enough, poor old beggar!'

'But he left his mantle, as you see.'

He looked at me a moment.

'What! do you mean, you——?'

'Yes, that is exactly what I do mean.'

'He is a great man, that Craig fellow—a truly great man.'

And then he leaned up against a tree and laughed till the tears came. 'I say, old boy, don't mind me,' he gasped, 'but do you remember the old 'Varsity show?'

'Yes, you villain; and I remember your part in it. I wonder how you can, even at this remote date, laugh at it.' For I had a vivid recollection of how, after a 'chaste and highly artistic performance of this mediaeval play' had been given before a distinguished Toronto audience the trap door by which I had entered my box was fastened and I was left to swelter in my cage and forced to listen to the suffocated laughter from the wings and the stage whispers of 'Hello, Mr. Punch, where's the baby?' And for many a day after I was subjected to anxious inquiries as to the locality and health of 'the baby,' and whether it was able to be out.

'Oh, the dear old days!' he kept saying, over and over, in a tone so full of sadness that my heart grew sore for him and I forgave him, as many a time before.

The sports passed off in typical Western style. In addition to the usual running and leaping contests, there was rifle and pistol shooting, in both of which old man Nelson stood first, with Shaw, foreman of the mines, second.

The great event of the day, however, was to be the four-horse race, for which three teams were entered—one from the mines driven by Nixon, Craig's friend, a citizens' team, and Sandy's. The race was really between the miners' team and that from the woods, for the citizen's team though made up of speedy horses, had not been driven much together, and knew neither their driver nor each other. In the miners' team were four bays, very powerful, a trifle heavy perhaps, but well matched, perfectly trained, and perfectly handled by their driver. Sandy had his long rangy roans, and for leaders a pair of half-broken pinto bronchos. The pintos, caught the summer before upon the Alberta prairies, were fleet as deer, but wicked and uncertain. They were Baptiste's special care and pride. If they would only run straight there was little doubt that they would carry the roans and themselves to glory: but one could not tell the moment they might bolt or kick things to pieces.

Being the only non-partisan in the crowd I was asked to referee. The race was about half a mile and return, the first and last quarters being upon the ice. The course, after leaving the ice, led up from the river by a long easy slope to the level above; and at the further end curved somewhat sharply round the Old Fort. The only condition attaching to the race was that the teams should start from the scratch, make the turn of the Fort, and finish at the scratch. There were no vexing regulations as to fouls. The man making the foul would find it necessary to reckon with the crowd, which was considered sufficient guarantee for a fair and square race. Owing to the hazards of the course, the result would depend upon the skill of the drivers quite as much as upon the speed of the teams. The points of hazard were at the turn round the Old Fort, and at a little ravine which led down to the river, over which the road passed by means of a long log bridge or causeway.

From a point upon the high bank of the river the whole course lay in open view. It was a scene full of life and vividly picturesque. There were miners in dark clothes and peak caps; citizens in ordinary garb; ranchmen in wide cowboy hats and buckskin shirts and leggings, some with cartridge-belts and pistols; a few half-breeds and Indians in half-native, half-civilized dress; and scattering through the crowd the lumbermen with gay scarlet and blue blanket coats, and some with knitted tuques of the same colors. A very good-natured but extremely uncertain crowd it was. At the head of each horse stood a

man, but at the pintos' heads Baptiste stood alone, trying to hold down the off leader, thrown into a frenzy of fear by the yelling of the crowd.

Gradually all became quiet, till, in the midst of absolute stillness came the words 'Are you ready?' then the pistol-shot and the great race had begun. Above the roar of the crowd came the shrill cry of Baptiste, as he struck his broncho with the palm of his hand, and swung himself into the sleigh beside Sandy, as it shot past.

Like a flash the bronchos sprang to the front, two lengths before the other teams; but, terrified by the yelling of the crowd, instead of bending to the left bank up which the road wound, they wheeled to the right and were almost before Sandy could swing them back into the course.

Baptiste's cries, a curious mixture of French and English, continued to strike through all other sounds till they gained the top of the slope to find the others almost a hundred yards in front, the citizens' team leading, with the miners' following close. The moment the pintos caught sight of the team before them they set off at a terrific pace and steadily devoured the intervening space. Nearer and nearer the turn came, the eight horses in front, running straight and well within their speed. After them flew the pintos, running savagely with ears set back, leading well the big roans, thundering along and gaining at every bound. And now the citizens' team had almost reached the Fort, running hard, and drawing away from the bays. But Nixon knew what he was about, and was simply steadying his team for the turn. The event proved his wisdom, for in the turn the leading team left the track, lost a moment or two in the deep snow, and before they could regain the road the bays had swept superbly past, leaving their rivals to follow in the rear. On came the pintos, swiftly nearing the Fort. Surely at that pace they cannot make the turn. But Sandy knows his leaders. They have their eyes upon the teams in front, and need no touch of rein. Without the slightest change in speed the nimble-footed bronchos round the turn, hauling the big roans after them, and fall in behind the citizens' team, which is regaining steadily the round lost in the turn.

And now he struggle is for the bridge over the ravine. The bays in front, running with mouths wide open, are evidently doing their best; behind them, and every moment nearing them, but at the limit of their speed too, come the lighter and fleeter citizens' team; while opposite their driver are the pintos, pulling hard, eager and fresh. Their temper is too uncertain to send them to the front; they run well following, but when leading cannot be trusted, and besides, a broncho hates a bridge; so Sandy holds them where they are, waiting and hoping for his chance after the bridge is crossed. Foot by foot the citizens' team creep up upon the flank of the bays, with the pintos in turn hugging them closely, till it seems as if the three, if none slackens, must strike the bridge together; and this will mean destruction to one at least. This danger Sandy perceives, but he dare not check his leaders. Suddenly, within a few yards of the bridge, Baptiste throws himself upon the lines, wrenches them out of Sandy's hands, and, with a quick swing, faces the pintos down the steep side of the ravine, which is almost sheer ice with a thin coat of snow. It is a daring course to take, for the ravine, though not deep, if full of undergrowth, and is partially closed up by a brush heap at the further end. But, with a yell, Baptiste hurls his four horses down the slope, and into the undergrowth. 'Allons, mes enfants! Courage! vite, vite!' cries their driver, and nobly do the pintos respond. Regardless of bushes and brush heaps, they tear their way through; but, as they emerge, the hind bob-sleigh catches a root, and, with a crash, the sleigh is hurled high in the air. Baptiste's cries ring out high and shrill as ever, encouraging his team, and never cease till, with a plunge and a scramble, they clear the brush heap lying at the mouth of the ravine, and are out on the front ice in the river with Baptiste standing on the front bob, the box trailing behind, and Sandy nowhere to be seen.

Three hundred yards of the course remain. The bays, perfectly handled, have gained at the bridge and in the descent to the ice, and are leading the citizens' team by half a dozen sleigh lengths. Behind both comes Baptiste. It is now or never for the pintos. The rattle of the trailing box, together with the wild yelling of the crowd rushing down the bank, excites the bronchos to madness, and, taking the bits in their teeth, they do their first free running that day. Past the citizens' team like a whirlwind they dash, clear the intervening space, and gain the flanks of the bays. Can the bays hold them? Over them leans their driver, plying for the first time the hissing lash. Only fifty yards more. The miners begin to yell. But Baptiste, waving his lines high in one hand, seizes his tuque with the other, whirls it about his head and flings it with a fiercer yell than ever at the bronchos. Like the bursting of a hurricane the pintos leap forward, and with a splendid rush cross the scratch, winners by their own length.

There was a wild quarter of an hour. The shantymen had torn off their coats and were waving them wildly and tossing them high, while the ranchers added to the uproar by emptying their revolvers into the air in a way that made one nervous.

When the crowd was somewhat quieted Sandy's stiff figure appeared, slowly making towards them. A dozen lumbermen ran to him, eagerly inquiring if he were hurt. But Sandy could only curse the little Frenchman for losing the race.

'Lost! Why, man, we've won it!' shouted a voice, at which Sandy's rage vanished, and he allowed himself to be carried in upon the shoulders of his admirers.

'Where's the lad?' was his first question.

'The bronchos are off with him. He's down at the rapids like enough.'

'Let me go,' shouted Sandy, setting off at a run in the track of the sleigh. He had not gone far before he met Baptiste coming back with his team foaming, the roans going quietly, but the bronchos dancing, eager to be at it again.

'Voila! bully boy! tank the bon Dieu, Sandy; you not keel, heh? Ah! you are one grand chevalier,' exclaimed Baptiste, hauling Sandy in and thrusting the lines into his hands. And so they came back, the sleigh box still dragging behind, the pintos executing fantastic figures on their legs, and Sandy holding them down. The little Frenchman struck a dramatic attitude and called out—

'Voila! What's the matter wiz Sandy, heh?'

The roar that answered set the bronchos off again plunging and kicking, and only when Baptiste got them by the heads could they be induced to stand long enough to allow Sandy to be proclaimed winner of the race. Several of the lumbermen sprang into the sleigh box with Sandy and Baptiste, among them Keefe, followed by Nelson, and the first part of the great day was over. Slavin could not understand the new order of things. That a great event like the four-horse race should not be followed by 'drink all round' was to him at once disgusting and incomprehensible; and, realising his defeat for the moment, he fell into the crowd and disappeared. But he left behind him his 'runners.' He had not yet thrown up the game.

Mr. Craig meantime came to me, and, looking anxiously after Sandy in his sleigh, with his frantic crowd of yelling admirers, said in a gloomy voice, 'Poor Sandy! He is easily caught, and Keefe has the devil's cunning.'

'He won't touch Slavin's whiskey today,' I answered confidently.

'There'll be twenty bottles waiting him in the stable,' he replied bitterly, 'and I can't go following him up.'

'He won't stand that, no man would. Gold help us all.' I could hardly recognise myself, for I found in my heart an earnest echo to that prayer as I watched him go toward the crowd again, his face set in strong determination. He looked like the captain of a forlorn hope, and I was proud to be following him.

(To be continued.)

Jesus the Carpenter.

'Isn't this Joseph's son?' Ay, it is He;
Joseph the carpenter—same trade as me—
I thought as I'd find it—I knew it was here—
But my sight's getting queer.

I don't know right where, as His shed must ha' stood—
But often, as I've been a-planing my wood,
I've took off my hat, just with thinking of He
At the same work as me.

He warn't that set up that He couldn't stoop down
And work in the country for folks in the town;
And I'll warrant He felt a bit pride, like I've done
At a good job begun.

The Parson he knows that I'll not make too free,
But on Sundays I feels as pleased as can be,
When I wears my clean smock, and sits in a pew,
And has thoughts a few.

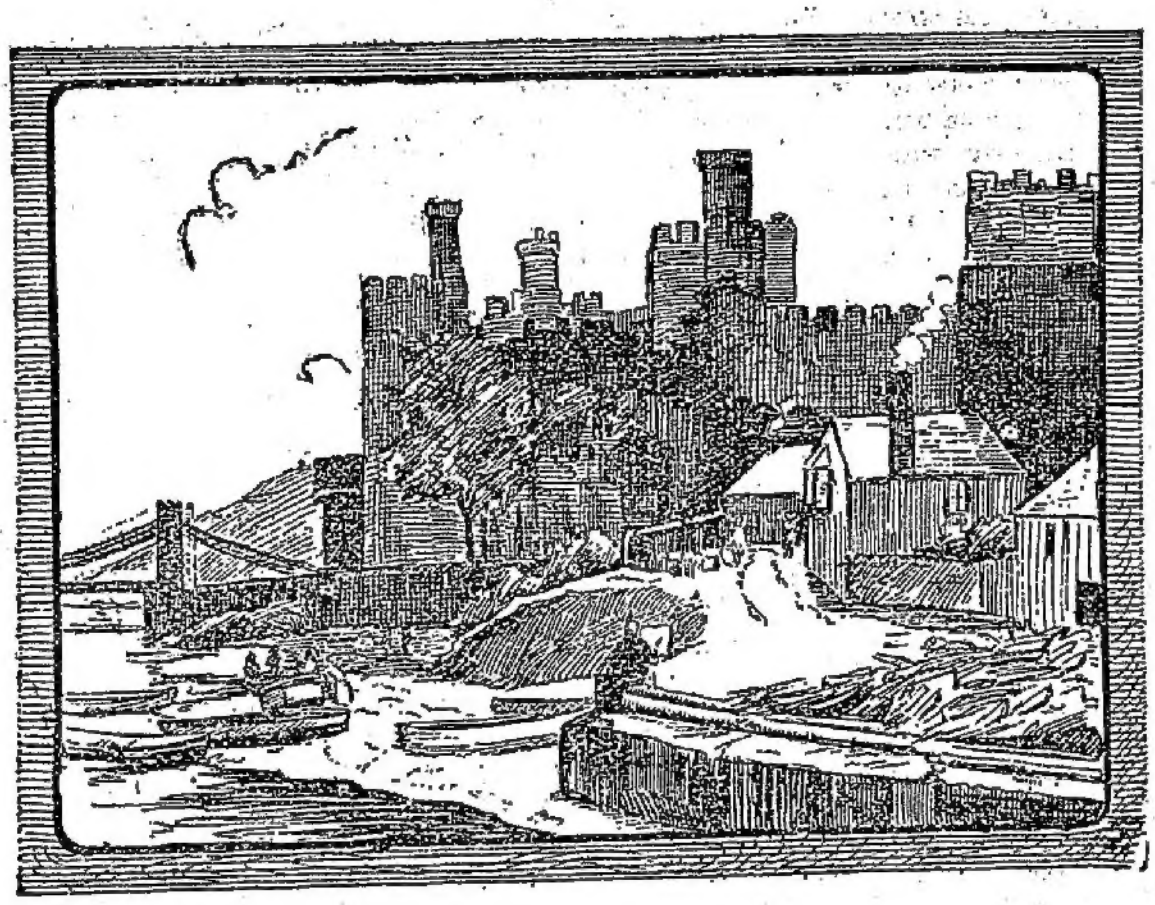
I think of as how not the parson hissen,
As is teacher and father and shepherd o' men,
Not he knows as much of the Lord in that shed,
Where He earned His own bread.

And when I goes home to my missus, says she—
'Are ye wanting your key?'
For she knows my queer ways, and love for the shed
(We've been forty years wed).

So I comes right away by mysen, with the Book,
And I turns the old pages and has a good look
For the text as I've found, as tells me as He
Were the same trade as me.

Why don't I mark it? Ah, many says so,
But I think I'd as lief, with your leave, let it go;
It do seem that nice when I fall on it sudden—
Unexpected, ye know.

—From 'Songs in Minor Keys.'



CONWAY CASTLE.

The Welsh Eisteddfod.

(By Taffy ap Jones, in 'Home Words.')

What is the Eisteddfod? In a word, it is one of the oldest literary institutions in the world. Year after year Taffy holds his great meeting, where prizes are to be won, and honors, such as every true Welshman loves, to be gained. Eight hundred years ago the first poetical and musical festival brought together all the bards of the kingdom. The King of North Wales, His Majesty Gruffydd ab Cynau, summoned from east and west and north and south the singers and minstrels, and a mighty concert must have been the result. Nearly eight hundred years later the Prince and Princess of Wales were made 'Bards,' without an examination, at Carnarvon. Seven years before, the Eisteddfod had been held in the Albert Hall 'in the chief city of Lud in Britain,' the Prince of Wales having been present on that occasion.

A good deal happens at an Eisteddfod. Every Hannah Jane and John Thomas in the Principality hopes to win, or see a friend win, a silver medal, or a money prize, in open competition. Nearly all are singing (choral and solo) contests, and one must needs have some courage to enter for an event. The tale is told of a most dramatic conflict which happened in the reign of Edward III. Two bards, Rhys Meigen and Davydd ap Gwilym were rivals for the poetic prize. Rhys recited his piece, but Davydd replied with such force that the ancient chronicle declares that Rhys fell to the ground and expired, being overcome by the bardic utterances of his opponent.

Hannah Jane and John Thomas do not risk such terrible encounters nowadays.

But let us begin at the beginning of an Eisteddfod. First comes the grand proclamation of proclamations, given 'in full view and hearing of the country people and aristocracy, in the face of the sun, and in the eye of light, where no weapon shall be bared against them.' It must be 'proclaimed under the expansive freedom of the sky, and under the protection of God and His peace.'

Suddenly a gentleman in a blue silk robe, bare-headed, and with his face to the sun, at the risk of a sun-stroke, ascends the Druidical stone and gives the opening prayers. He is a clergyman, and he is followed by the Crown Bard, who makes a speech.

Then the candidates for degrees come up. There are three grades—druids, orates, and bards. To-day the bards receive many new members. For instance, a young man, pale with fright, and looking as if he were going to be married, appears, supported between two bards, who handle him very much after the manner of police constables. He is led to the stone, where the Crown Bard receives him, and, holding his hand, asks him a number of questions on poetry or music. If they are answered satisfactorily, the Crown Bard jumps on the stone, uncovers, turns to the sun, and shouts three times, 'Jarrett Roberts—Pencerdd Eifion.'

After this degree-giving is over, we go to the 'Pavilion,' where the Eisteddfod is to be held. There proceedings begin with much speech-making, and are followed by all sorts of competitions, from essays on learned subjects, singing contests for single voices and chorus, to making a patchwork quilt or slate-splitting.

Many are the striking incidents. A pretty peasant woman, in her national costume, knitting in hand, comes forward to play the triple harp in the performance of the harping bards. Then we have the Chair Prize Competition. One year it was given for the best piece of poetry on the Bible. The prize was £21 and a small gold medal.

Let me close this slight sketch with a translated extract from a recent Eisteddfod speech of Llawdden— the bardic name of the Dean of St. David's, who has gained the hearts of all who know him:—

'One of the chief charms of the Eisteddfod is that it brings together the eminent men of the nation. In England they are statesmen, warriors, commercial men,

IN THE LAND OF THE EISTEDDFOD—A WELSH WOMAN IN NATIVE COSTUME.

scientific men, but the eminent men of Wales are her bards, her literary men, her musicians, her hymn-composers, and her preachers. What do we see in the cottage homes of Wales? Not pictures of horse-races—not portraits of prizefighters. No, no; but portraits of the pulpit giants of the Principality, portraits of Gospel heroes, of the warriors of the Cross, the messengers of peace.

'As a nation we have many faults, but there are spots even on the sun. Show me a nation with higher national characteristics: a nation among whose people the Word of God has such a power in family and social life: a nation in which law, sobriety, honesty, and industry so prevail as amongst the Welsh: a nation by whom the Sunday is better sanctified and the Sunday School upheld: a nation which is now speaking the same language which was spoken by their forefathers more than 2,000 years ago: or show me another nation whose working men sacrifice the greater part of a week to attend a musical and literary festival in their thousands.'

Some day, perhaps, there will be an English Eisteddfod, and then—!

At the Prison Gate.

'Passing the State prison in Wethersfield on foot, one spring morning, thirty years ago,' said an old gentleman recently—one of the prison commissioners of the State of Connecticut—'I saw the gate open, a man come out, and the gate close again. The man looked pale and worn and sad. he stood by the gate, in the broad May sunshine, in a perplexed, undecided way, and I noticed that the tears were streaming down his cheeks. He looked up and down the road, up at the sky, then stood with bowed head.

'"Where now, my friend?" I asked cheerfully.

'"I don't know, good sir," replied the man sadly. "I was just thinking that I would throw my hat straight up into the air and go the way the wind blew it. I would rather go back into the prison, but they won't have me now that I have worked out my sentence. They won't have me there, and I don't suppose they will have me anywhere," he went on in a broken voice, "but I have got to be somewhere. I don't know what will become of me; foresight isn't as good as hindsight, sir.

'"I am walking to Hartford; take passage with me," I said.

'"You won't care to be in such company," he replied, looking at me incredulously. "Perhaps you don't understand that I have just worked out a sentence in the State prison here."

'"I understand," I said. "We are all wayfarers; come along, and we will talk the matter over, and decide as we go what can be done for you."

It was a lovely, warm day. We walked slowly and talked a good deal, or, rather, my companion talked, and I encouraged him to do so. He answered my questions frankly, clutching hungrily at my ready sympathy. He was very free to talk of himself, and said at last, as I smiled at some unimportant disclosure:

'"Reserve was never one of my failings, sir. If I tell any thing, I tell all. That is the way I came to get into prison. Had I kept silent, I should have gone free; but by this time, my heart, full of pent-up sin, would have been a mass of corruption."

'I found that he had made shoes in the prison. "I never had a trade before," he said. "I think if I had, I would not have fallen into errors. Had I had a legitimate way of getting a living, I would not have been tempted as I was. I have a good trade to begin on now, however. I have brought that away with me, as well as a bitter memory and a lasting disgrace."

'"It is not the fact of your being in prison, but the crime that carried you there, wherein lies the sin," I said.

'"But those who are not found out escape the disgrace," he replied bitterly with a deep sigh, and I hastened to say:

'"I think I know a man here in the city who will hire you. He is a large shoe manufacturer, and I am sure he will make a place for you as a favor to me, even if he does not really need a man."

'The more I thought about it, the more confident I felt that my friend would take him into his manufactory.'

'"If I were in your place," I said, as we entered the city, "I would not lisp a word about having been in prison."

'The poor fellow stopped short and looked at me. The hopeful look dropped out of his face, his eyes filled with tears, and he said in a broken voice:

'"You have been very kind, but I had better bid you good-bye, sir. I cannot live and lie. I promised my God last night in my cell, that was so dark at first, but so light at last when Jesus came to me there, that I would be true whatever befell me, and I will keep my word."

'"Forgive me for tempting you at the outset," I said. "Come on."

'I saw my friend, and told him the whole story. He had a little talk with my man, and made a bargain with him. That night, just at the hour for the shop to close, we three went into the work-room."

'"Here is a poor fellow who was discharged this morning from the Connecticut State prison," said the proprietor. "I am going to give him a start in life by taking him into the shop; he will begin work tomorrow."

'There were indignant glances among the men, and one spoke up hastily:

'"I shall leave if he stays. I will not work with a jail bird."

'"Very well," said the employer, "any one who wishes to leave can bring in a bill of his time in the morning."

'Only one man—the man who had constituted himself spokesman—left.

'Ten years later that discharged convict was the owner of that manufactory, and the man who would not work with a "jail-bird" was one of the journeymen. As I said to begin with, that was thirty years ago. The man whom I met at the prison door is now a Senator in the Legislature of one of our New England States. He said to me the other day:

'"I tremble when I think what the result might have been, had an evil, instead of a good, friend met me outside of the prison door."'—'Advocate and Guardian.'

The Find-the-Place Almanac.

TEXTS IN EXODUS.

Jan. 14., Sun.—Certainly I will be with thee.

Jan. 15., Mon.—All the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

Jan. 16., Tues.—The blood shall be to you for a token.

Jan. 17., Wed.—The Lord went before them.

Jan. 18., Thurs.—Fear ye not.

Jan. 19., Fri.—Go forward.

Jan. 20. Sat.—The Lord is my strength.

A Remarkable Physician.

Last spring, in the city of New York, occurred one of the most remarkable funerals ever witnessed. The hearse which bore the dead man was attended by sixty pall-bearers, and each man of the sixty, owed his life, under God, to the ministraton of him they bore. Behind the hearse walked eight hundred men in line, hardly one of whom but was indebted to the dead man for his ability to be there.

Two hundred and ninety-three carriages followed, and these in turn were attended by a large number of people on foot.

Who was this man, who, being dead, could so stir the hearts of the people? Who was he, that he should be mourned over by fifteen thousand persons in one day, because they would look upon his face no more? Was he a great general; a world-honored statesman?

No. He was a simple east-side physician, whose patients were dwellers in the tenement districts, and whose mourners were the poor to whom he had ministered.

Doctor Aronson inherited a small property from his father, and early determined that his life should be spent in service for others. He made lung diseases his specialty, and studied with Koch in Berlin, and in the best schools in Europe. When he came back to New York he was unknown, save to physicians, but he immediately opened, at his own expense, a hospital for consumptives in the poorest part of the city, and threw himself heart and soul into the work of alleviating the distresses of friendless patients.

It was his custom when called upon to attend a poor family, to leave a few dollars on the table behind him. In the bestowal of these gifts neither creed nor race was recognized.'

A friend said of him: 'He was a man who took peculiar pleasure in seeing other people happy. He often declared that if he had ten millions of dollars, he would spend his life in driving around the tenement districts, and relieving the poor.'

He himself once said: 'I like to discover a case where a hard landlord is pushing a poor tenant to the wall. Then it is my delight to come in at the last moment, raise my hand, and call a halt, with a cheque for the amount owed by the tenant. Then real happiness is seen in the face of the one relieved.'

'A man's life is so short at best,' he was wont to say. 'It would be an easy matter to make the world happy, and oneself, too, if each person would but contribute all he possibly could to the relief of the suffering.'

Several years ago a case of blood-poisoning occurred on the east side of New York The patient was a poor woman, and she was critically ill. Physicians, to whom applications had been made, had refused to take the case because of the exceptional risk in the treatment that was required.

The night when Dr. Aronson heard of it was the night of his brother's wedding, and he was dressed to attend it, He was told that the woman would die unless she was operated upon in less than two hours. He threw off his dress-suit, hurried to her bedside, and performed a successful operation. A few days after, he himself was taken down with blood-poisoning, contracted from the sufferer, and for weeks lingered between life and death.

Then a wonderful and beautiful sight was seen Hundreds came daily to inquire for the good physician. Scores of people knelt together in the open air around his doorstep, and prayed aloud for his recovery. The man was greatly beloved, because he had greatly loved and grandly given. When he recovered, he said he would gladly undergo the same again to save life,

At last came a day when upon his return from a call on a poor and wretched patient this good man dropped dead upon the sidewalk, near his own doorstep, his end thus coming, it was said, just as he had long secretly hoped and prayed that it might come.

The end came, we have said. But who can predicate an end to a life so filled with the Spirit of him who was, pre-eminently, the Helper and Healer of men?—'Youth's Companion.'

LITTLE FOLKS

The Boy Artist.

I hope all my young readers either can draw or will soon learn to draw, and I think they will like to hear of a little boy who, many years ago, managed to draw without either pencil or paper. At the time when Edward the Third was reigning in England, and when drawing and painting were in their infancy, there lived in Italy, not many miles from the beautiful city of Florence, a man named Bondone.

He was a husbandman, honest and kindly, and respected by all his neighbors.

Bondone had a son who, at the time I am writing of, was about ten years old, and whose merry laugh and clever answers amused and delighted all who knew him. The boy's name was Giotto, and it was his duty, day by day, to drive the sheep of which his father had the care to the mountain sides to graze, and to tend them until the evening, for fear they should stray.

GIOTTO USED TO MAKE DRAWINGS OF HIS SHEEP.

It may seem that Giotto was a lucky boy to spend his days out on the sunny hillside; but he was not idle. He used to make drawings of his sheep, not on paper with a pencil, for he had neither, but on smooth pieces of slate, and for a pencil he used a sharp stone.

One day it happened that a great artist, Cimabue, who lived in Florence, was going on business to the little village where Giotto lived; and coming over the hillside he caught sight of the boy absorbed in his drawing.

But on looking quietly over his shoulder Cimabue was astonished to see how excellent the work was for a child of his age; and when he found how fond Giotto was of drawing, Cimabue suggested to him to come with him to Florence, and be really taught to be an artist.

Giotto was only too delighted, and both went towards the village together, where Cimabue asked Bondone if he might take his son back with him to Florence. To this the father gratefully consented; and little Giotto left home that day to start on his career as a painter; and in the end he became an even greater artist than his master; so great indeed, that in course of years his reputation reached the Pope, who sent for him to Rome to do work for him.

Every boy and girl in London can go to the National Gallery, and there they can see some of the very pictures painted by this little boy when he was grown up.

Giotto became one of the most famous artists that the world has produced, and now his pictures are of almost priceless value.—'Child's Companion.'

The 'Snow Prayer.'

A little girl went out to play one day in the fresh, new snow, and when she came in she said: 'Mamma, I couldn't help praying when I was out at play.'

'What did you pray for, my dear?'

'I prayed the "Snow Prayer," mamma, that I heard in Sunday-school.'

'The "Snow Prayer!" What do you mean, my child?'

'I mean that beautiful "Snow Prayer" in the Bible, mamma. You know it says, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."'

A Mess of Pottage.

(By William Zacharay Gladwin, in Forward.')

'I wonder if Hildegarde Augusta Delaplaine will come back next year,' said Mattie Peregrine.

'Of course, she will,' answered her room-mate, Nellie Corner, glancing up a moment from her packing. 'She has to. She's to be a teacher, you know.'

Nellie went on packing for a full minute, and then said, 'Why?'

'Oh, I was just thinking about graduation. Nellie Corner and Mattie Peregrine will be respectably dressed, to say the least, but Hildegarde Augusta Delaplaine—think of a name like that—

'I know one thing though. If she does come back next year I shall give her a hint of what will be expected of her.'

The next year came and with it came important changes in that western school for girls. The principal, an elderly woman, resigned and her place was taken by young Mr. Archibald Crenshaw, who had recently married a woman who was also engaged to teach in the school. After careful study of the records of his graduating class he said to his wife, 'I fancy, Mary, that Miss Delaplaine will be our best student.'

'There are nine in the class, I believe?' observed Mrs. Crenshaw.

'Yes, nine.'

'And which is the poorest student, do you think?'

'I hardly know. Miss Peregrine and Miss Corner seem to have the lowest class standing, and the housekeeper looks very grim when their names are mentioned.'

Mrs. Crenshaw laughed. 'They are probably the richest and the dressiest girls in the school, Archie. I shouldn't wonder if Miss Delaplaine were poor.'

Mr. Crenshaw frowned. 'While we are at the head of this school.

Mary,' he said very positively, 'a pupil's purse shall not affect discipline or favor. If it should be as you say I hope Miss Peregrine and Miss Corner may study to some purpose this year. I shall certainly advise them to do so.'

The next day, which was near the opening of the school year, there was a steady stream of arrivals, which included the entire senior class.

'Hildegarde Augusta Delaphine is back, Nellie,' said Mattie Peregrine, when they were settled in their room.

'So I see,' responded Nellie, lightly.

'You remember what I told you I was going to do?' went on Mattie.

'Oh!' said Nellie, a little doubtfully.

'Yes, I am,' said Mattie, with determination. 'I'm going to give her to understand that the class expect her to be respectably dressed for commencement. If she will have the finest sounding name and the best class standing, her dress must be in some sort of keeping. Don't you think so?'

'Why yes. But I wouldn't say anything to her. I really wouldn't, Mattie.'

'Well, I really will,' was the obstinate answer.

Nobody heard what she said, nor knew exactly when she said it, but a week later Mattie Peregrine wore a self-satisfied air while Hildegarde seemed worried and depressed. For a month her class standing retained its usual grade, and she enjoyed the unlimited favor of the principal and his wife. Then Mr. Crenshaw began to look upon her with disfavor.

'I never was so disappointed in anyone, Mary,' he said. 'The girl has grown positively stupid. She rarely has her lessons and she seems irritable.' He had whirled round from his desk as he spoke, and sat looking up into his wife's face as she stood for a few moments before leaving the study.

'She is not stupid, Archie,' said Mrs. Crenshaw, slowly. 'She is worried about something. Shall I try to find out what is wrong?'

'I wish you would,' was the answer, 'I wish I had never engaged to teach and control butterflies.'

Mrs. Crenshaw was unusually skilful in dealing with girls, but she could make no progress with Hildegarde, who persistently held her at a distance, and was most unresponsive to any hints about her own personal affairs. The teacher was discomfited that she could only learn from other girls that Hildegarde had suddenly become an authority on fancy work in the school, and that she did a great amount of all sorts of it. Then she understood Hildegarde's irritability, and she looked into the girl's strained eyes.

Another month went along, and Hildegarde reports were worse than ever. The air was full of the making of Christmas presents.

'I'm buying mine this year,' observed Nellie Corner complacently. 'Who would ever have thought that Hildegarde Augusta Delaplaine would have so taken to fancy work? I'm glad she did, though. Her work is beautiful, but it isn't cheap. She charges enough for it.'

'Isn't she a fright, though?' said Mattie Peregrine. 'Her eyes are so red that if she didn't accomplish so much fancy work one might almost accuse her of weeping.'

Poor Hildegarde! Weeping, as well as fancy work, had something to do with her red eyes, although Mattie Peregrine did not suspect it. For her loss of her class standing was a continual grief to her. In more hopeful moments she believed that she might possibly make it up after Christmas. But when she turned the leaves of the books already passed over by the class, and realized that she knew almost nothing of the subjects treated there, her heart failed her again.

The Christmas vacation came, but Hildegarde did not leave the school. She had no home except with distant relatives, who would not miss her or long for her coming. Wearily she put away every vestige of fancy work. Then she counted her earnings and said soberly to herself, with no exultation of thought or look, that there would be enough to buy a presentable commencement gown. Then, drawing out her beloved books, she set to work to make up for lost time. But what was the trouble with her eyes? They pained her badly, and her sight was not clear.

Day after day, as the short vacation passed, her hungry mind did its best, but her eyes grew no better; but rather they grew worse, if anything.

The last day of vacation she sat alone in her room, utterly discouraged. There was a light tap at the door, and Mrs. Crenshaw entered.

'Miss Delaplaine,' she began as soon as she was seated, 'I have come to have a very plain talk with you.'

The girl, with her red, weary eyes looked up at her pathetically, and the 'talk' slipped out of Mrs. Crenshaw's mind. Instead, she said impulsively: 'Oh, why will you, with your mind, spend so much time on fancy work? Mr. Crenshaw is greatly disappointed. I suppose you are fond of it—'

'Fond of it!' exclaimed Hildegarde, and then she burst into tears. 'I hate it. I was doing it to earn money for my commencement gown. The class seemed to think I would disgrace them— She stopped abruptly and there was silence in the room.

'Oh, my dear, my dear, what a pity!' said Mrs. Crenshaw, presently. 'I hope you will pardon me, but you will go on with your studies now, I am sure.'

'I can't,' sobbed Hildegarde. 'My eyes have given out. That commencement gown is my mess of pottage.'

Then said Mrs. Crenshaw as she came close to the weeping girl and clasped her hand, 'I think we shall recover the birthright after all, Hildegarde. I shall be glad to read your lessons to you until your eyes are stronger.'

Then began the happiest half year of Hildegarde's life—a half year crowned at its close with all that she could have wished for. Her eyes were well, her gown was becoming, her class standing was high, and her plain face looked beautiful with its glow of happiness.

'But I shall never, dear Mrs. Crenshaw, buy another mess of pottage,' she whispered when she said good-by.

Frowns and Smiles.

If you should frown and I should frown,
While walking out together,
The happy folks about the town
Would say: 'The clouds are settling down,
In spite of pleasant weather.'

If you should smile and I should smile,
While walking out together,
Sad folks would say: 'Such looks beguile
The weariness of many a mile
In dark and dreary weather.'

—'St. Nicholas.'

LESSON III.—JANUARY 21.

The Preaching of John the Baptist.

Luke III., 1-17. Memory verses 3-6. Read Malachi III., 1-7; IV., 1-6.

May be used as a temperance lesson.

Daily Readings.

M. Promised. Isa. 40: 1-8.
T. Announced. Lk. 1: 5-17.
W. Welcomed. Lk. 1: 57-80.
T. Herald. Mal. 3: 1-6.
F. Minister. Jn. 1: 15-28.
S. Martyr. Mk. 6: 14-29.

Golden Text.

'Prepare ye the way of the Lord.'—Luke III., 4.

Lesson Text.

Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene. (2.) Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. (3.) And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. (4.) As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying: 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord. Make his paths straight. (5.)Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth. (6.) And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. (7.) Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, 'O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? (8.) Bring forth, therefore, fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. (9.) And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; every tree, therefore, which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. (10.) And the people asked him, saying: 'What shall we do then?' (11.) He answered and said unto them: 'He that hath two coats let him impart unto him that hath none; and him that hath meat let him do likewise.' (12.) Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him: 'Master, what shall we do?' (13.) And he said unto them: 'Exact no more than that which is appointed you.' (14.) And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying: 'And what shall we do?' And he said unto them: 'Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.' (15.) And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ or not, (16.) John answered, saying unto them all: 'I indeed baptize you with water, but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.' (17.) 'Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner, but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.'

Suggestions.

John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah, was a child of promise. His mother was a cousin of the mother of Jesus, and his father, Zacharias was a priest in the temple. Of these godly parents John was born about six months before the birth of our Lord. Away in the desert country, the lad grew up, strong in the Lord, and in the power of purity and abstinence.

Alone with God for nearly thirty years, he had become imbued with God's hatred of sin and sham. When Jehovah sent him out to stir the world, his lips were opened, and he spoke the word of God with power.

John was sent to prepare the way of the coming King. 'The way for the coming of the kingdom of God was full of obstacles of every kind—the military power of the Romans, which had conquered the world; the throne of the emperor, who was worshipped as God; the crimes and sins intrenched in customs, fashion, wealth, and the very structure of society; the pride, the learning, the prejudices of the whole Jewish nation; all the sins, and evils, and selfishness of the human heart. And still every unregenerate human heart is a wilderness abounding in obstacles to the coming of its king.

Illustration.—The voice comes to us, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord.' (1) Fill up the valleys, the sins of omission—defects of prayer, of faith, of love, of work. (2) Bring down the mountains of pride, sin, selfishness, unbelief, worldliness. (3) Straighten out all crooked places, crooked dealings with others, crooked ways of sin, settle difficulties, confess sins. (4) Smooth the rough places—the harshness of temper and manner, the lack of courtesy, the coldness, the fault-finding, which are the little foxes that spoil the vines, the flies in the precious ointment, the spots in our feasts of charity that mar the beauty of holiness.'—Peloubets Notes.

'Generation of Vipers.' Those whose hearts were under the dominion of the devil—'that old serpent' (Rev. xii., 9; Gen. iii., 14; John viii., 44.)

'Who hath warned you?' asks John. These who had thought themselves so righteous, being punctilious in small points of the law, seemed to suddenly discover that following the devices of their own hearts was not leading them on to God's holiness. John's preaching awakened men's consciences. But when convicted of evil, they still thought that their position as children of Abraham would bring them the blessings promised to Abraham, though they were at enmity with the God of Abraham. The promises of blessing are only to those who keep the Covenant. God looks only upon the heart. He is no respecter of persons, high position in Church or State can not make up for lack of real love and loyalty to God. God can as easily make Christians out of stones as out of vipers. The stony heart of unbelief, and the viperous heart of impurity can alike be cleansed and quickened by the precious blood of Jesus.

Each class of people who came to John's preaching, and afterwards asked him how they should show their repentance, were faithfully warned, each against his own particular sin. Men are apt to think a great deal more of the sins of their neighbors than of their own particular sins. But God teaches each man to look to his own condition first. When a man is right with God himself, he can safely point out to others their defects, and lead them to the Saviour, who has power to cleanse and keep.

The Jews were beginning to expect the Messiah at about this time, as the prophecies pointed to his coming. Those who heard of John's wonderful preaching began to wonder if this could be the promised Christ. But John quickly told them that he was not the Christ, but only a voice crying in the wilderness (Mark 1., 2-8), preparing the way of the Lord. He said: 'I have baptized you with water; but there cometh he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire. (R.V.) The old English version used the phrase, 'the Holy Guest,' for the Spirit of God is to be our guest, abiding in our hearts (John xiv., 17) holding us for God.

Junior C. E Topic.

Daily Readings.

Mon., Jan. 15.—Through the disciples. Luke 10: 19.

Tues., Jan. 16.—Jerusalem. Acts 2: 41.

Wed., Jan. 17.—In the early church. Acts 14: 27.

Thu., Jan. 18.—Roman Empire. Acts 28: 30-31.

Fri., Jan. 19.—The promise of triumph. John 12: 32.

Sat., Jan. 20.—The reason of success. Matt. 28: 20.

Sun., Jan. 21.—Topic—Some triumphs of missions, Acts 19: 10-20. (A quarterly missionary meeting. Asia).

Opium Catechism.

(By Dr. R. H. McDonald, of San Francisco.)

CHAPTER VII.—MORAL.

1. Q.—What do we learn from studying the opium habit?

A.—That the use of opium as well as that of alcohol or tobacco brings in time its own punishment.

2. Q.—Why are these three poisons so dangerous?

A.—Because they are so deceitful. Each seems to soothe, but it soothes only to destroy, like the snake that charms the bird before it kills it.

3. Q.—Is it as wicked to fall into the tobacco or opium habit as it is to drink alcoholic liquors?

A.—It is wicked for us to take anything that clouds the reason which God has given to us, because we need our reason at all times to keep us from falling into sin.

4. Q.—What can we say of those who transgress the law of God by using these stimulants?

A.—'The way of the transgressor is hard.'

5. Q.—If you were sick and in pain, should you like to take opium?

A.—No; it is better to suffer severe pain than to run the risk of falling into so terrible a habit.

6. Q.—Was there more excuse for taking opium years ago than there is now?

A.—Yes, since chloroform may be given patients during painful operations, there is little excuse for taking opium.

'Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein; and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.'—Proverbs, xxvi., 27.

The Besetting Sin.

(By R. W. Van Scholck, D.D., in 'Michigan Advocate.')

I have just received a letter from an excellent Christian brother, in which he confesses that, although forgiven of his sins one year ago, which fact he can never doubt, he is yet in much distress of mind because he has not overcome the habit of using tobacco. Ten days after his conversion, while walking before his residence, smoking at the time, he thought these words came to him: 'Can't you do that much for me?' that is, stop smoking. He did not stop, nor has he since for any length of time, in consequence of which he often has seasons of intense unhappiness, and at times is so miserable he has had the thought of suicide.

The number of besetting sins is legion, but to each individual the besetting sin is that which most wars against his soul, and oftenest trips and throws him in the race for victory. What shall he do with this sin? First of all let him be honest with himself, and admit that it is this sin which is crippling and defeating him. Let him see that this is the sin which doth so easily beset him, and that, by indulgence in it, he is making himself miserable, and losing the crown of success he might otherwise wear. Then, fully seeing and realizing this, let him make it his business to lay the sin aside. I say 'his business,' because it is a mistake to suppose that the Lord is going to do what he commands us to do. Many keep themselves in the way of temptation, and then pray the Lord to deliver them. They dally with their darling sin, thinking they can get free by divine interposition, and awake at last to find themselves bound hand and foot, the slaves of a cruel and tyrannous besetment which has no mercy on them. All the sad lapses in morals have come from this dalliance with the besetting sin. Can one play with fire and not be burned? Can one touch pitch and not be defiled? Can one give the least encouragement to what he knows to be his besetting

sin without fearful risk and peril? 'Lay it aside,' says Paul. If it be a struggle, so much the more need of fighting it out until victory is won. If you fail again and again, do not cherish despairing views of yourself or of God. Try again. You want to win. God wants you to win. All best men and women on earth want you to win. All the holy angels want you to win. Only devils want you to fail. But remember it is you who must lay the besetting sin aside. God will not lay it aside for you. Good men and women cannot lay it aside for you. The holy angels cannot lay it aside for you. It is you who must do this if you are to be crowned a victor. You can have help from God, from good men, and angels, still you are to be the fighter and conqueror of the besetting sin. Prayer helps mightily. 'More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of;' but,

'We rise by things that are under feet,
By what we have conquered of good and gain,
By the pride deposed and passion slain,
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet.'

Best of all Jesus stands watching our struggle all the time—stands where we can see him every moment— stands ever before us as the One who was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet without sin. The bruised reed he will not break; the smoking flax he will not quench. Oh, my brother, my sister, tempted almost to the point of despair of yourself, almost to the act of self-destruction, you, you, you, looking unto Jesus, may overcome as he overcame!

Sweet Cider.

(Clara A. Raworth, in 'Union Signal.')

New cider is by nearly all persons called sweet for about three days after the fruit is pressed, by many for a longer period. We know that it contains considerable quantities of alcohol within three days. There is thus a narrow margin for the correct application of the name, and a very broad one, in which it ventures upon the domain of a most deceitful and insidious poison.

Cider undergoes a change so stealthily that ordinary persons do not easily detect it. No one would venture upon drinking a glass of milk which might or might not contain strychnine; it would be well indeed if all would avoid as carefully a drink which may or may not contain a more treacherous enemy.

This indefiniteness in the application of the name is every year mustering to the ranks of drinkers thousands of the best of American manhood. If 'sweet' cider may be drunk at home why not abroad? If there is no danger connected with drinking it from the barrel which stands in father's orchard, surely there is none connected with accepting that which is given or sold abroad? Right here is a special danger from the fact that once you begin to buy cider you are dealing with an entirely unknown quantity.

Few persons deliberately set themselves to learn to love intoxicating drinks. The fruity taste of the cider covers the taste of alcohol but does not protect from its effects. Slowly or rapidly, but surely, the use of 'sweet' cider leads to the desire for stronger drinks, and thousands thus cultivate an appetite for liquor who would never enter a saloon; and Deacon So-and-so who keeps cider made from his own apples is a greater menace to temperance than tippling Mike who lies in the ditch.

He who knows the danger of the first approach of the most terrible of foes, who sees through its thousand masks, who has seen the fall of innocent youth and of strong, glorious manhood, who knows how, little by little, the tyrant fastens its chains and drags its victims down—such a one will set his face steadily against anything which will be the beginning of a brother's ruin.

If your mouth belongs to God, do not put tobacco in it. Every organ and part of the body belongs to God. Use them, therefore, as for him.

Correspondence

A Day of Prayer.

Dear Boys and Girls,—

Have you read the Find-the-Place Almanac? I think you will find it on page 7. I want you to read it, and learn the verses every day, and find their place in the Bible. Every girl and boy who intends finding these places and learning the verses may send his name to the 'Messenger Honor Roll of Bible Searchers.'

The Bible is the most important book in the world, because it teaches us about God, and how we should live, so as to please our Father in Heaven. It tells us of Jesus, our Saviour, the only one who can make us ready to live for ever in peace and joy with God. Therefore we should search the Scriptures, and become familiar with the Word of God. I hope to receive many names to add to this list in the next week or two.

Do not forget to pray for peace. More of our own brave men are going to the war. Some of us will be losing fathers or brothers. Hundreds of innocent little Boer children in Africa will be left fatherless after this terrible war. Pray, and remember that God hears the prayers of the youngest who pray in faith. I should like to set a day for prayer, say the last Sunday of this month, Jan. 28, if the war is not over before that time. Will you all remember that day as a special time to pray that the war may cease? Pray that our soldiers may be true to their God as well as to their Queen, that they may be strong men in Christ Jesus. God bless you all.

Your loving friend,
THE CORRESPONDENCE EDITOR.

Messenger Honor Roll of Bible Searchers.

Jean Beddome, Manitoba; May H. Wood, New Brunswick; Winnie Brander, Walter Brander, Nova Scotia; Hester Avery, Willie Avery, Mary and Mabel Avery, Benjamin F. A., Annie A., and M. C. A.

More Letters.

We have lately received letters from Maud S., Annie S., Lewis I. B., George L. Snow, Wilhelmine Margaret, Gordon, Olive Grigley, Lottie Bird, Clifford H. Murray, Mabel M., Lena May, Hiram Lee, Will, Annie Florence Macauley, Ethel Gill, John H. A. Anderson, Dollie, Edna F., Norma Lowick, Elizabeth McKenzie, Anna C. Youngson, G. M. Summers, Jean Grace Elliott, Royce H. Hill, Peter, Myrtle and Clenny, Nora Malcolm, Archie Binnie, Sadie B.

Sable River.

Dear Editor,—We have a Division, and a Band of Hope. My sister and I joined the Band four weeks ago. I wanted to join before; but my mother would not let me until she thought I could understand what it meant to take a pledge. My sister and I learn pieces to recite every Band day. We have no saloons, and I never saw a drunken man. There were about fifty moose killed last winter, and four bears, in the woods, not many miles away from here; but the law will not allow any more moose to be killed now. We had a very short winter. I learned to skate, and I think it fine fun.

KEITH R. D., aged 10.

Red Deer.

Dear Editor,—I go to school from the first of April to the end of November, except during busy times. There are five of us going to school. The school that we go to is named Willowdale. It is not very large, and the most children that come there are twenty-four. The place where the school is built is a nice place, with plenty of bushes on either side, so that the boys in summer can dig them up and plant them around the school-house.

FRED E., aged 13.

South Branch, Ont.

Dear Editor,—We take the 'Messenger' and 'Witness,' I like reading all the stories very well; but I like the Correspondence column best. I would like to see another letter from Clara, her letter about crossing the prairie was very interesting. I live on a farm about four miles from Cornwall, with my grandfather, and mamma is dead, and papa went to Manitoba, and I have not heard from him for six years.

I sometimes go for the cows on horseback in the summer. The only pets I have are a pair of bantams, they will eat out of my hand. There is a creek not far from here. We have fun skating on it in the winter.

EVA F.

Griswold, Man.

Dear Editor,—This village is a great place for winter sports, such as skating, hockey and curling. When the snow is soft we snowball each other, sometimes the boys snowball the girls. In summer we play football or baseball. Every summer we have six weeks of holidays. Through the holidays we go to see our friends; but sometimes we have to work. I went out to our hay-field to rake hay. I thought it lots of fun; but next summer, as I know how to do it very well, I will have to go to it in real earnest. When we came home in the evening, we would play croquet. My brother Norman and I would play against my sister and the hired man; but we usually got beaten, and then we howled.

GEORGE, aged 12.

Vandeleur, Ont.

Dear Editor,—I have a mule named Minnie, , I have a tricycle, and I ride it to school in the summer, a distance of one mile and a half. Papa says that no Sabbath-school superintendent, or anyone, should use tobacco, and I think he is right. I am a temperance boy, and I like to hear my papa read the temperance stories in the 'Messenger,'

FRANK D.

Silver Water.

Dear Editor,—We live about eight miles from an Indian village; but they are civilized. They are just as good as white folks. On Jan. 6 they have a great supper, and dance, and give their babies Indian names.

DOLLIE, aged 11.

Pilot Mound.

Dear Editor,—I think Lulu A., was very right in asking all the boys and girls to sign their first name. I have no pets except a very black cat, which I call Sweep. I have a little brother, three years old, and a little sister, two years old in May.

MAY C., aged 10.

McVille, Ala.

Dear Editor,—My father is a Baptist preacher. He preaches to four churches. I go to school every day. My teacher is Miss Rosa Chambers, Baby brother's name is Rochester.

DAISY R., aged 10.

Scotstown.

Dear Editor,—My oldest sister attends McGill Normal School, in Montreal; and at the Christmas examinations came first out of fifty-eight. My mother sent the 'Northern Messenger' to one of my cousins in La Camas, Washington, and they liked it so well, that they got it for their Sabbath-school. The scholars of the school here have started a library, and have now fifty books.

MARY, aged 11.

Yarker, Ont.

Dear Editor,—My cousin and her husband, who is a preacher, went to Japan some years ago. They stayed there three years. They lived in the United States after they came back. Then they went to Manitoba, and now live in Kingston.

JENNIE.

Foxboro, Mass.

Dear Editor,—My papa is dead, and I live with my mamma and little sister. My sister will be two years old, on March 22. She is just beginning to talk, and she is just as cunning as she can be. I love to take music lessons. I have taken the 'Messenger' for nearly two years. I love to read it, especially the Correspondence. My Aunt took the paper and she told papa about it. She said it was a beautiful paper, and papa said he would like to have me take it. My aunt lives in Swansea. I have two cousins, one of them is a little boy.

BESSIE D., aged 8.

HOUSEHOLD.

Children's Companionships.

(By Mary Wood-Allen, M.D., in 'Congregationalist.')

A handsomely dressed little boy stood looking wistfully out of the window of an elegant house at the play of three barefooted children in the yard of a small cottage across the street. 'Oh, do let me go and play with them,' he cried; 'they have such fun.'

'I really don't see, Robbie, why you want to go and play with those rude children. They have no nice toys like yours. Why can't you play with your express waggon or rocking-horse?'

'Robbie glanced contemptuously at the beautiful toys and replied frowningly: 'They don't need playthings; they have each other. Oh, mamma, let me go, they are such beautiful children.'

Mamma, looking out of the window, saw only three noisy urchins, 'tooting' horns, playing drum on a tin pan, hallooing, climbing fences, tearing clothes and occasionally squabbling among themselves, and she did not enjoy the thought of Robbie looking and behaving as they did, so she said quietly but firmly: 'I can't let you go to play with them, but I'll play with you.'

'Oh, mama,' said Robbie, despairingly, 'you don't real play, you only play play.'

What a keen insight into facts this little outcry displayed and what a longing for true companionship! It ought to have touched the heart of the mother with a new revelation of Scripture that, 'it is not good for man to be alone,' be the man six years old or twenty-six or sixty.

As the adult man must live with his kind, so the child-man should live with his kind, and in the varying phases of child life learn to adjust himself to the demands of society. The one child among a family of adults does not learn the social virtues. How can he? He is in a world not made for him, not suited to him, and he is debarred from the world where his interests and opportunities are. He may be taught the superficialities of good manners, but there is nothing to develop within him the emotions, thoughts and desires, which would engender the truest politeness. He does not seem selfish, it may be, because no demands for generosity are made of him. He is not learning the property rights of others, because no one wants his possessions. He is not receiving lessons in yielding to the wishes of others, for in important matters he obeys commands; in his plays he has his own way.

I knew a child who, brought up alone, did not know how to behave when other children came in to visit her. She would look at them timidly and then, perhaps, run to the piano and pound on it and sing at the top of her voice, or she would run up and down the room shouting loudly. Her mother could not understand why the child did not play with her little visitors, but the truth was she did not know how. The presence of another child elated her, and, as she knew no way to play with other children, she tried to entertain them by making a noise of some kind.

Observant parents can learn more of their children's true character by watching them in their play than in any other way, and if they are wise can use the knowledge thus obtained in helping the child to overcome his defects and strengthen his character. even children may have character, but they can only attain it by mingling with their kind. If taught self-control, truthfulness, honor, fair-dealing and purity in childhood, not by seclusion, but by meeting the problems of child life under the sympathetic and not too obtrusive guidance of their parents, they will be fitted to meet bravely the problems of adult life when they are perhaps deprived of parental counsel and sympathy.

In excessive fear that their children may be injured by evil influences, parents lose sight of another fact, namely, that children may be taught to become positive moral forces for the influencing of their companions.

'He's not a good boy for you to play with,' said a mother to her little son.

'But, mamma, I'm a good boy for him to play with,' was the reply of the child, who consciously recognized his own moral worth.

This is suggestive. Why should not the child be taught that he is to be a moral power, taught that instead of being afraid of being led into wrong he is to be a conscious leader into righteousness. As he grows older he will meet evil in its various forms, and it may be that through negative training he will fall an easy victim to temptations; whereas, if he had been taught the positive side of virtue, had grown up with the consciousness of his own divinity and his obligation to lead others into paths of righteousness, evil would have had no power over him.

Child hermits are no more to be desired than adult hermits, but because children are immature of judgment their companionship must not be left to chance, nor must it be without supervision. The methods by which his associations shall be regulated must be left to the wisdom of the parent, but companionship of his peers the child must have if he is to grow naturally into the social life of the world, be it in business, pleasure, intellect or religion.

Reserve Toys.

Each year, with the arrival of Christmas, there rushes into the home in which children dwell a flood of toys that threatens to inundate the nursery, and make all semblance of order impossible. The playthings are so numerous that the satiated owners turn from one to the other without deriving thorough enjoyment from any one of them. The novelty soon wears off, and in a few weeks the pretty trifles are more or less broken or marred, and the little ones view them discontentedly, and long aloud for fresh fields and pastures new. To avert this certain reaction the judicious mother will select from among the mass of toys a number which are to be laid aside for future use. It is not necessary to tell the children of this scheme. A large box in the attic or the upper shelf in a closet may be a storehouse for many of these treasures. There they will rest unharmed until the playthings in the nursery become an old story, when they in their turn are relegated to the upper shelf, and the new toys appear. These will be hailed with delight by the little ones, by whom they have been forgotten. Or it may be that the children have been confined to the house by a storm, or, more trying still, to the nursery by some ailment that makes life seem dreary to their baby eyes. Then mamma appears with her reserve fund, and outdoor allurements, and indoor ailments are forgotten in the joy of new possessions. This system keeps the nursery from being overcrowded with toys, and preserves the toys from the breakages consequent upon such overcrowding. But, best of all, it provides the children with a variety of amusements through the monotonous winter days. — 'Harper's Bazaar.'

Give Peace Again.

O God of Love, O King of Peace,
Make wars thoughout the world to cease.
The wrath of sinful man restrain;
Give peace, O God, give peace again.

Remember, Lord, Thy works of old,
The wonders that our fathers told;
Remember not our sins' dark stain—
Give peace, O God, give peace again.

Whom shall we trust, but Thee, O Lord?
Where rest but on Thy faithful Word?
None ever called on Thee in vain—
Give peace, O God, give peace again.

Where saints and angels dwell above,
All hearts are knit in holy love;
O bind us in that holy chain;
Give peace, O God, give peace again.

H. W. Baker.

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